

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4879

INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

JCS WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 7044

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CENTO, MARR, MASS, US

SUBJECT: CENTO MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM

REF: A. STATE 102595, DTG 281247Z APR 76 (NOTAL)

B. ANKARA 7655, DTG 101456Z OCT 75 (NOTAL)

1. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN FULFILLING THE SECRETARY'S PLEDGE MADE AT THE 1975 CENTO MINISTERIAL MEETING THAT THE US WOULD PROVIDE UP TO \$5 MILLION TO UPGRADE CENTO'S MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK. WHILE FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE WERE NOT INCLUDED IN FY 76 AND 77 BUDGET REQUESTS BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF A DETAILED SURVEY AND MULTI-YEAR EXPENDITURE PROJECTIONS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT DOD HAS HAD THE CENTO COMMUNICATIONS SURVEY UNDER REVIEW FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, AND WE BELIEVE THAT IT MIGHT NOW BE POSSIBLE TO INCLUDE FUNDS FOR THIS PROJECT IN THE FY 78 SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

2. THE RATIONALE FOR UPGRADING THE CENTO MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM SEEMS TO US TO BE SOUND, ALTHOUGH FROM ANKARA WE CANNOT
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JUDGE ITS IMPORTANCE RELATIVE TO WORLD-WIDE PRIORITIES. CENTO'S

CURRENT MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS NETWORK IS OBSOLETE AND IN SOME RESPECTS BARELY SERVICEABLE. AN UPGRADED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM WOULD PROVIDE, INTER ALIA, VOICE AND TELEPRINTER LINKS BETWEEN THE CENTO COMBINED MILITARY PLANNING STAFF (CMPS) HERE IN ANKARA AND NATIONAL MILITARY SERVICE HEADQUARTERS AND SELECTED INSTALLATIONS IN THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES. ADDITIONALLY, THE UPGRADED CENTO NETWORK WOULD PROVIDE DIRECT ACCESS TO THE NATO NETWORK. THE CENTO SYSTEM WOULD BE DESIGNED TO SUPPORT ANNUAL EXERCISES SUCH AS MIDLINK IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND OTHER REGIONAL CPX AND FIELD EXERCISES. IT WOULD ALSO PERMIT THE INITIATION OF A CENTO ALERT SYSTEM AND THE EXCHANGE OF NAVAL OPERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION.

3. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE, WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE OPPORTUNE TIME TO SHOW OUR SUPPORT OF THE CENTO ALLIANCE IN A TANGIBLE AND USEFUL MANNER. A POLITICAL GAIN IS INHERENT IN THE FACT THAT THE CENTO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM WILL STRENGTHEN US SECURITY TIES WITH THE REGIONAL MEMBERS, AS WELL AS PROVIDE NEW CAPABILITIES IN OUR OWN GLOBAL MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM.

4. WE BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT THE REVIEW OF THE PROPOSED CENTO MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM SHOULD BE COMPLETED AND THAT FUNDS SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE FY 78 SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN FULFILLMENT OF THE SECRETARY'S 1975 PLEDGE.
FRANCIS

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